

GOD'S PROMISE; *a grand Incentive*
to CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at

WALMER in *KENT*,

On *Sunday* the 12th of *July* 1752.

On Occasion of *the General Collection*
of *Charity*, made within *the Provinces* of
CANTERBURY and *YORK*, by HIS
MAJESTY'S *Special Appointment*, in Favour
of THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY for
the Propagation of THE GOSPEL in *Foreign*
Parts.

By *SAYER RUDD*, M.D. Minister of *the Parish*.

Publish'd at the Request of *the Principal Inhabitants*.

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Gods Promise, a grand testimony
to Christian Liberty.

SEERMON

WILLIAM K. NEW.

On Sunday the 1st of July 1772.

On Occasion of the General Convention
of Clergy, made within the walls of
CHATEAUBERT and AOK, by His
Majestys General Assembly in Town
of the Independent Society for
the Propagation of the Gospel in
Foreign Parts.



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ECCLESIASTES, Ch. XI. Ver. I.

CAST *thy Bread upon the Waters: For
thou shalt find it after many Days.*



AFTER *the Letters*, which have been just now read to you; the One from our most gracious SOVEREIGN, and the Other from THE LORD ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury; I persuade myself, there are few present, who are not, in some Measure, apprised, both of *the Nature* of that great Duty, which is now immediately before us; and of *the Obligations* we are under to appear in it, from *the superior Authority*, by which it comes recommended. — *Charity*, even That, which is of *Christian Original*, is the great and pious Work, to which we here, in general, stand invited: And that, in Concurrence with

the above *Letters*, the Words of our Text have a direct Tendency in themselves, to spirit us for this Service, will readily be acknowledg'd, when we come to examine their Contents. Because, as we shall find them express in the Inforcement of the great Business of Charity itself; so we have the Pleasure of observing, that *the Authority of Heaven* here seconds the Voice of *the Highest Powers* amongst us on Earth: All uniting their Sacred Influence to bind the Duty effectually upon us, and make us truly Zealous and Chearful in the Discharge of it.

NOR does the Text subject us to *an arbitrary, fruitless Injunction*, or call us to labour at *Uncertainties* and for *Nought*: So far from it, that if it imposes *a Command* upon us in the former Part of the Verse; Care is taken, that it be followed with *proper Encouragement* in the latter.—
CAST *thy Bread upon the Waters*: There we meet with *a positive Injunction* to Charity from ALMIGHTY GOD, constituting the first General Division of our Text. But is it left here? By no Means. Therefore it follows in the other General Division: FOR *thou shalt find it after many Days*. Which Words are, at the same Time, both *a good Reason* for our Charity, and *a forcible Incentive* to it: As they bring us the Promise of it's being *useful to others*, as well as *profitable to Ourselves*: Intimating, however, that

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it is but fitting and necessary, that we leave *the Accomplishment* of these Things to *the Divine Pleasure*.

As to *the Command*, delivered in the former Part of our Text, we observe as follows:

I. BREAD is a Term used in Holy Scripture, for the several Necessaries of *the edible Kind*¹; tho' more especially, for that Food, which is made of *Corn*². And in this Application of the Word, it is well known, that BREAD, from it's general Usefulness, is commonly called *The Staff of Life*. But this is only it's *more restrained Sense*. For it is likewise found to include, *Every Provision* and *Benefit*, at large, by which we may properly support Natural Life, and comfort Those, who labour under Penury or Want³. And therefore, when THE ALMIGHTY threatens to reduce a City or Nation to such Circumstances, He does it by saying, that He will break *The Staff of Bread*: To intimate, that He will deprive them of *All the Necessaries of Life*; as may be seen by consulting the Scriptures refer'd to in *the Margin*⁴.

Now, taking the Word here in this *extensive Sense*, when we are commanded to *cast our*

¹ 1 Sam. xiv. 24. ² Gen. iii. 19. ³ Isa. xxxiii. 16. Ps. exxxii. 15. Matth. vi. 11. ⁴ Lev. xxvi. 26. Ps. cv. 16. Ezek. iv. 16. Ch. v. 16. and xiv. 13.

BREAD upon the Waters, it intends the Obligations we are under, to minister to the Necessities of the poor and distress'd Part of our Species [our indigent Fellow-Christians especially] by *All the Means* in our Power. We are to consider Them as Persons, who challenge our Assistance in it's *last Extent* ; and who have a Right to share our Bounty in it's *full Compass* ; agreeable to the *Variety* of their Wants, and the *Degree*, in which it may have pleased THE ALMIGHTY to bless us.

II. As to the Term WATERS, it admits of Consideration in three different Lights ; being expressive not only of *The Number* of the Persons to be reliev'd, but also, of *Their Particular Situation* on the one Hand, and *Their General Disposition* on the other.

I. IT is commonly known, That the Term WATERS, in the Scripture-Dialect, when *personally* applied, signifies *A Multitude*, or *Considerable Body* of People¹. Nay, we find, that even *Kingdoms* and *Tongues* and *Nations* stand represented under That Emblem².—So that, to *cast our Bread upon the Waters*, in this Acceptation of the Word, is, To be as *diffusive* or *general* in our Charity, in Reference to *The Ob-*

¹ Isa. viii. 7.

² Rev. xvii. 15.

jects of it, as possible. We are to give it a *free Course*, in Imitation of OUR Heavenly FATHER, who causes his Sun to shine, and his Rain to descend on All his reasonable Creatures promiscuously¹; and therefore, where it is in our Power, should think ourselves obliged to send our Charity, in it's benign Influences, to *the remotest Corners* of the Earth.

AND here the Term appears admirably adapted to *The Numerous Objects*, for Whom we are now solliciting: *The various Members* of Our Establish'd Church, and *The yet-unconverted Nations* of the lately discovered *American World*. This, however, is only the *First View* of the Term WATERS in our Text. For

2. IT is farther observ'd to express a State of *Trouble* and *Affliction*. This Sense of the Word likewise, is too frequent in Holy Scripture, to want any other Proof, than what will arise on the bare Inspection of the Passages below².—But if THE WATERS, in general, intimate a Circumstance of *Distress*; a Condition, more or less, *afflictive*: It's Reference to the present State of our *Protestant Brethren* in *the West Indies*, will be presently seen.

THE WORD and SACRAMENTS are justly considered, as the great Mediums, thro' which

¹ *Matth. v. 45.* ² *Psf. xlii. 7. lxix. 1, 2. and lxxxviii. 7. Isa. xliii. 2. Ezek. xxvi. 19. Luke xii. 50.*

all our Supplies for *the Divine Life* are convey'd ; and are therefore quite necessary, not only to *the spiritual Increase* of those, who already believe ; but also for securing a *Succession* of Converts to The Church. Wherefore to labour under a *total Privation* of these Means of Grace ; to suffer an *absolute Famine* in our spiritual Provisions : Or, supposing the Case not *immediately* so desperate ; but to find, on a general Survey of Things, that we have but too much Reason to fear a *Suspension* of these Supplies for a Time ; or that they will be dealt out *more sparingly* to us : Or, in fine, putting the Case as low as possible, to see ourselves left to *drag-on heavily* in supporting *the Institutions* of the Christian Church, thro' a *Deficiency* of the proper Funds : What can there be imagined *more terribly afflictive*, to a pious, benevolent Christian ? One, who is not *more fully apprised* of his own spiritual Wants, than he is *deeply concern'd* for the eternal Welfare of his Fellow-Creatures.—And, as it is here to be observ'd, that *the last* of the *above-suppos'd* Cases is, at this Time, *the certain State* of our religious Interest in our *American Colonies* ; and therefore what gives Rise to *the present Application* : So, it is by no Means improbable, but that *the several other Circumstances* may, at last, take Place ; unless our Brethren in those Parts of the World find

find themselves *duely assisted* by our generous Contributions.

3. THERE remains yet *another Acceptation* of the Term WATERS, and which, tho', at first View, *forbidding*, we need not, however, in the least, scruple bringing into the Account : Because *an Antidote* against every Suspicion and Fear, that may be thought to lie against us from this Quarter, is absolutely at Hand. Is it ask'd, What may this *Third Sense* of the Word be ? I answer : That besides its including *an utter Inability* in the Persons, sharing our Bounty, to make *any proportionate Return*, thro' their *impoverish'd, calamitous* State ; [in which Light it belongs, in Part, to the preceeding Head :] It farther suggests *the general Unworthiness* of the Persons reliev'd, as They appear, through *a sordid, negligent Temper*, no way dispos'd to make *the Returns actually in their Power* : Meaning Those of *Gratitude and Thankfulness*.

HERE then, it will be observ'd, we labour under *a double Discouragement* ; being concern'd, it seems, on this Face of Things, in the Matters of our *Charity*, either with Those, who are *unable* ; or Such as are *unwilling*, to make *the proper Returns*.

WHAT then is our *Relief* under the former Difficulty ? Or, rather, What is the Consideration left us, either to prompt us to, or give us

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Pleasure

Pleasure under, an Act of *Liberality*? I answer that, with all the Discouragements, which seem to surround this State of the Question, we shall, nevertheless, be soon convinc'd, that Charity to *the most necessitous Part* of our Species is our *absolute Duty*; whether we regard *the Doctrine* of CHRIST on this Head, or *the Command* of GOD here in the Text. And where we can prove, that a Point of *Duty* lies incumbent upon us from Heaven, it will be acknowledged, I imagine, that the Creature's *Submission* is out of Dispute.

IF we dare form our Sentiments on CHRIST'S Estimate of Things, or are capable of seeing our Obligations to That Practice, He is pleas'd to recommend; we shall readily persuade ourselves, that a Person's *Incapacity* to make us *suitable Returns*, is so far from being a Reason, that will justify us in *with-holding* our Charity from him; that *the Poor*, and *Those only*, are the Persons, we ought, in this Case, *immediately to seek out*, and make *the first and chief Objects* of our Munificence. Hear to this Purpose OUR LORD'S Words by St. Luke: *When thou makest a Feast* [that is, appearest in any Act of *Hospitality* or *Benevolence*] *call the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee*¹.—Here then, we have

¹ Ch. xiv. 13, 14.

OUR SAVIOUR'S *Pleasure* in the Point. *A Law* from Him, exactly describing *The Objects* of our Charity. To which we may subjoin *the positive Injunction* found in our Text.—That Sovereign Majesty, to Whom we owe Ourselves and our Substance, has here laid us under a strict Charge, *To cast our Bread upon THESE WATERS*: To distribute our Charity to Persons of *This* precise *Character*.—This then, to a pious Christian, is both *his Warrant* for Action, and *the Measure* of his Obedience. When he stands convinced, that *Liberality to the Poor*, Those of the Christian Character especially, is *the Ordinance* of Heaven, he no longer *confereth with flesh and blood*,¹ as to the Fitness and Necessity of the Thing; but sees, at once, in *the Command* itself, that he is under the last Engagements *to honour THE LORD with his Substance, and Part of all his Increase*². Nor this *at large* only; but, rather, in *that precise Manner*, which shall best correspond with the express Dictates of God, the supreme Legislator.

BUT then, to do Justice to this Part of the Subject, it must likewise be observ'd that, at the same Time that our Charity, in the present View of it, affects us as *a Duty*; it will be also found to bring *it's own Reward* along with it: Whether we consider *the Honour*, that attends it

¹ Gal. i. 16.

² Prov. iii. 9.

on one Side, or *the Pleasure*, that results from it on the other.

As to *the former Consideration*, it is easy to see, that Those, who are employed by the THE ALMIGHTY, in distributing what is properly *His Bounty* [because we only give Him of *His Own* ¹ ;] are to be consider'd, as acting in no less Quality than That of *Almoners* to *The Blessed and Only Potentate* ². They are herein truly, and properly, *The Ministers of Heaven*. And who would not choose to distinguish Himself in that Service, which has such an illustrious Character annex'd to it? — Besides that, we ought to remember *the Words of the LORD JESUS*, how He said: *It is more blessed to give, than to receive* ³.

IN respect to *the Pleasure*, which accompanies these Charitable Acts; I pretend not to be Master of Words equal to the Description. Because, while the generous Christian can promise both for *the Spring and Design* of his Liberality; *his Conscience bearing him Witness* ⁴, that his Benevolence takes it's Rise from a truly *Christian Principle*, and is directed to a truly *Worthy End*; he stands possess'd, not barely of a *present Flow* of *inward Delight*, but has Matter laid-up for *future, pleasurable Reflection*: Things, of them-

¹ 1 Chron. xxix. 14.

² 1 Tim. vi. 15.

³ Acts xx. 35.

⁴ Rom. ix. i. and 2 Cor. i. 12.

selfes,

selves, greatly superior to *any Return*, that could be made him in *an external or temporal Way*.

A DOCTRINE This, possibly, that may sound like a *Paradox* with the Generality of Mankind. However, I will venture to say, *not less true*, for being *but little understood*.—A bare *Consciousness*, that he has faithfully discharged his Duty, especially in those Matters, which concern *the Honour* of his GOD, and *the spiritual Advantage* of his Fellow-Creatures; is, to a good Man, *the highest Pleasure imaginable*. Call a Person of that divine Character to any *one Instance* of Obedience [but, particularly, to this of *Charity* ;] in which he may be only *an Instrument* to serve and glorify his Maker ; and, he is sure to be happy, in *The Action Itself* : Whether there be a Prospect of his Meeting with *any suitable Return* from Those, who share his Liberty, or not. Nay, it adds to his *Pleasure*, in Offices of this Kind, that, according to his GREAT MASTER'S Rule, he is actually serving Those, *who have it not in their Power to requite him*. Because a Behaviour of this Sort is a Proof, that he acts, at once, from *a very sincere Love* to ALMIGHTY GOD ; and from *the most generous Regard* to Those, who bear *His Image* ; and Who, therefore, come recommended to him, both as *the Workmanship* of Heaven, and his *near Relatives* in the Flesh. —So that here, a Sense of *Moral Obligation* evidently

evidently concurs with *The Divine Command*, spoken of above, to *inforce* and *sweeten* this benevolent Practice.

NOT that the Returns, which the Christian Benefactor may justly expect, are wholly of *the spiritual Kind*, or such as centre intirely in *the Pleasures* of his own Breast: He has the farther Liberty of turning his Eyes on *material Objects*, and promising himself a certain Recompence from that Quarter. Because, be the Difficulties, on the Part of the Creature, what they will; ALMIGHTY GOD is still The same in reference to *His Own Promise*; and *This*, as we shall see more fully hereafter, stands as much engag'd on one Side of the Question, as *It* does on the other: I mean, Whether *the Objects* of our Charity are Persons, who *cannot*; or Such, as *will not*, return the Obligation. But this leads me

To *the other View* of the Word, with its *attending Discouragements*, as stated above.— And it is, indeed, too obvious to be denied, that *the general Temper* of Mankind, as here exhibited under the Character of THE WATERS, is *disingenuous* and *untractable*; and therefore, *forbidding* enough. They are, it is true, to be considered, in the Gross, as *an uncertain, turbulent Body*; equally *unthinking* and *ungrateful*. In which Light, it is plain, they appear as a Composition,

position, which promise no more Fruit to the Christian Benefactor, than the Husbandman could expect, were he to cast *his Seed* on the Surface of *the most swelling Waters*. For as, in the one Case, *the Natural Seed* would be instantly carried down *the Current*; and therefore baffle all Expectation of a Crop: So, in the other, heap what Benefits you will, on *the giddy, inattentive Croud*; they seem, to an Eye of Sense, to be lost, as soon as confer'd; being sunk, as it were, in the Depths of *Ingratitude*.

AND is *this Idea* of the Word, any more than *the preceding*, to clog the great Business of *Christian Liberty*? Is this *the Lion*¹, that is to deter us from entering on this Part of our religious Course? Formidable let it be: We have still superior Strength on our Side. And therefore are warranted to say: What is *this*, or *the other Mountain*, before our *Zorobabel*?² Every Difficulty shall vanish before Almighty Power. For here THE Eternal God interposes for us. He takes the Work into His own Hands, and makes Himself answerable for the Issue of our Charity. Is the Question then: Whence does this appear? I answer,

FROM *the Second General Part* of the Text, which we are therefore in this Place to consider a little more particularly. For to *the Command*,

¹ Prov. xxii. 13.

² Zech. iv. 7.

in the former Part of the Verse, which we have been hitherto endeavouring to explain ; there is subjoin'd, as was hinted above, *a very encouraging Promise in the latter Part of the Text.*—

FOR thou shalt find it after many Days.

HERE then, we are to observe is A PROMISE ; *short, but full* : The Words, it must be confess'd, are *few* ; but the Assurance is *strong* and *peremptory*. And this, without the least Restraint as to the *Condition* or *Temper* of the Persons, claiming our Assistance. Be They therefore, either so *poor*, as to make a Return *impossible* ; or, so *disingenuous*, as to render it *improbable* : What is there in it ? Our Reward is neither suspended on What is *uncertain*, in the latter Case ; nor subject to What is *impracticable*, in the former. The Thing is absolutely taken out of the Hands of Those, who are to become *the Objects* of our Charity ; and, by that Condescension, which is peculiar to OUR COMMON FATHER, is made the express Charge and Business of Heaven.

IT is true, ALMIGHTY GOD does not bind Himself to *any particular Time*, for making us the necessary Returns. But why is this ? Merely to exercise *our Faith*, on the one Part ; and give Scope to *our Obedience*, on the other. Where then is *the Occasion* of Complaint ? Be it *after many Days* : It shall, however, certainly come,

come, in GOD'S *Time* : And this, by *the best Means* and in *the best Materials*. And He *defers* it only, To *illustrate our Graces*, and, in the End, *beighen our Reward*. Shall we not then obey Him according to the Purport of *His Command*? How prove we *our Devotion*? Shall we not *wait His Time* for the Return? Say, Where is *our Obedience*?—Come it shall: If not *now*, in *the Life present*, yet [provided thou art a real Christian] *at the Resurrection of the Just*¹. If not to Thee, *personally*; to Others, at least, *thy Descendants*; Instances of which are numerous in *Church-History*: If not *in Kind* (tho' *That* seems included in the Text) yet *in Quality*; which Thou shalt acknowledge infinitely preferable. For remember, as was said above, The Strength of *Israel*² engages Himself on the Part of the generous Benefactor. He absolutely assures him *a full Recompence*.

ARE there, however, still *Jealousies* in the Point? Persons, with whom the Whole of this passes for *bare Assertion*? And who, to justify themselves in *this contradictory, unbelieving Spirit*, are free enough to retort upon us *our own Explication* of the Term WATERS, as given above? Be it so. It obliges us then, to some farther Attempts for their Conviction. That, if possible, we may not only obviate *All Objections*

¹ Luke xiv. 14.² 1 Sam. xv. 29.

in this Article ; but also settle, with the greatest Precision, *the true Character* of Those, who present as *Objects* in the Charity before us.— Please therefore to indulge me the necessary Inlargement.

WE read, that *Moses* sweeten'd *the Waters* in the Desert, by casting *a certain Wood* into them ; ' the same, we are told, with what *the Mahometans* now call *Alvah* : *The Present WATERS* then, by Nature, perhaps, as *bitter*, as those in *the Wilderness* ; are equally capable of *Correction* in the Hands of GOD. Supposing then, as some Expositors of good Note have done, That, separate from what is *Natural* in this Case, there is also herein an Allusion to *the Cross* of OUR SAVIOUR ; we shall readily believe, that *This Wood* is such a sovereign *Alterative*, that where it's Divine Influence is felt, those, who are *naturally* of the very worst Spirit, cannot fail of being sweeten'd into every Thing the Reverse.— What then have we farther to do in this Affair, except it be, to resign it intirely to *the Disposal of Heaven* ? And who is the Person, that dares dispute the Surrender ? or, rather, that will not make it with the greatest Readiness and Pleasure ? THE ALMIGHTY certainly *challenges* this Work to Himself ; and therefore our Duty is to *stand still* and *see His Salvation*². For *This*, in

¹ *Exod.* xv. 25.

² *Ibid.* xiv. 13.

brief,

brief, is the general Issue of the Matter, and here we may leave it with the last Satisfaction: That be THESE WATERS, *the Present Objects* of our Charity, *What* they will in their *Natural Capacity*; there is, however, Nothing in them *so unpromising* to an Eye of mere Sense; *so untractable* with regard to human Efforts; but ALMIGHTY GOD can subject it to His Pleasure, and give it that Turn, which shall best answer the Designs of His Grace.

AND thus, indeed, we actually find it, in Reference to *The Subjects* now under Consideration; as a present, irrefragable Proof, that THE ALMIGHTY has already begun, and therefore, we may presume, will certainly go on, to fulfil the gracious Promise in the Text. We, at this Juncture, behold in Them *many endearing Returns* of our Bounty: THE BREAD, which we have dispers'd amongst them, *coming back* to us in some of *the most desirable Effects*. Witness, those warm Expressions of *Gratitude*, which still accompany *all their Memorials*; which still breathe through *every Application* for continued Supplies. Witness, *that zealous Attachment*, which They perpetually discover to our happy Constitution in *Church and State*. Witness again, *that pious Fervour*, with which They apply themselves, by all the Methods in their Power to give a *Lift* to our Holy Religion; a more

free Course to Christian Knowledge on the *American* Continent. But to inlarge here, would be to anticipate the Subject, as it belongs more properly to another Part of the Discourse.— What then, have we to infer from hence, in Favour of *our Brethren beyond the Seas*? Evidently this, as Matter of *Pleasure*, for the Services already done Them; and likewise, Matter of *Encouragement* to those, They farther expect at our Hands: That we are here so happy, as not to have to do with *Strangers*; that *the Spirit* of these Persons has been *thoroughly proved*. And again that, in Point of the present Charity, we need be in no Doubt of meeting *the proper Returns*; having received many from Them already in the Course of no less than *Half a Century*: And, consequently, that we have it in our Power to observe, that THESE WATERS are *an Exception* to Those of the *common Sort*: That they have been *sweeten'd* by ALMIGHTY GOD; *corrected* and *season'd* to the most valuable Purposes. Is the Demand now: The Inference with regard to *Ourselves*! What Other can it be? But that, provided we have only *a true Notion* of the present Charitable Institution, and are conscious to *any due Impression* from the most noble Undertaking in the World; there cannot be found a single Person amongst us, who would not gladly *bear his Part* in so glorious a Work:
Exerting

Exerting himself particularly *at this Time*, not barely to support THE SOCIETY in *their present Engagements*; that *the Appointments* now on foot, may by no Means suffer a *Diminution*; but also, if possible, that Provision might be made for *enlarging the Funds* of this Charity: That so, the yearly Distributions issuing from it for the Future, may, on the one Hand, keep Pace with *the increasing Necessity* of our COLONIES Abroad; and, on the other, answer *the extensive Views* of THE pious SOCIETY at Home.

“ A NOBLE Proposal This,” may some, probably, be saying. “ But, alas! *the Qualification* “ and *Influence*, hinted at above, are *too generally* “ *wanting*. We have heard, indeed,” may these same Persons continue, “ What has been already “ suggested on this Subject in the present Ser- “ mon; and yet, are obliged to own Ourselves, “ greatly to seek in *the main Particulars* relative “ to it. We know little, or nothing, of *the* “ *Original and true Nature* of the present Cha- “ rity: Have but *very obscure and imperfect Ideas* “ of THE SOCIETY Itself: Are at a Loss to “ form a just Opinion of *the Measures* by which “ They act, and of *the Progress* They have hi- “ therto made. And, to speak freely,” may They add, “ our Ignorance in these several im- “ portant Articles, is a *present Restraint* upon “ us; being absolutely in Want of such Lights,

“ as

“ as may direct us into *the real Usefulness* of the
 “ Charity itself, and therefore Point out *our Duty*
 “ in Reference to it.”

HERE then, at last, is the grand Matter of *Difficulty*.—Permit me, therefore, as this is the Case, to endeavour Your Information in the several Particulars above. And this, both as a Means to remove such *Stumbling-blocks*, as may, at present, lie in your Way ; and lead you to *those Heights* of Christian Generosity, which you seem desirous of reaching.

I. IT is then observable, in the first Place, That *the Institution* of THE present SOCIETY, and *the Quality* of the Members composing it, are Considerations, that loudly attest it's *Dignity* and *Excellence*. — To understand This, it must be known, That Persons, equally illustrious for *Rank* and *Piety*, towards the Close of *the last Century*, had observ'd with no small Concern, that our *Plantations* in *the West Indies*, were in the last Danger of becoming a Sacrifice, either to *Atheism* and *Infidelity*, on the one Hand ; or to *Popish Superstition* and *Idolatry*, on the other : Partly, by reason of *the mean Provision* then made for the Ministers of the Church of *England* in *some* of our *Settlements* ; and partly, by *a total Want* of all Provision for their Maintenance in *Others* : In Consequence of which, the
 Inhabitants

Inhabitants of those Parts, were either *wholly deprived* of the Administration of *the Word* and *Sacraments*; or else, could only be *Sparingly* supplied with *Those Means of Grace*: While They lay, at the same Time, greatly expos'd to *the restless Attempts* of Those, who declared in Favour of the above desperate Principles. This being the melancholly Situation of our *American Colonies*; it pleased GOD, as was said before, so to affect and impress the Minds of some of *the Greatest and Best Men*, at that Time in the Kingdom, both in *Church* and *State*, with These, the religious Distresses of their *Protestant Brethren* Abroad; that They most humbly besought King WILLIAM the Third of Glorious Memory, to erect Them into a *Corporation*, [as He accordingly did by *Letters Patent*, bearing Date the 16th Day of *June*, 1701;] empowering them to receive and manage *the Charitable Contributions* of All His loving Subjects (if so dispos'd) for the establishing and supporting a Fund, that might enable Them to make Head against *the above dangerous Evils*; by sending *able and faithful Missionaries* Abroad, and maintaining a Succession of *Orthodox Clergy* in the Midst of our *Plantations* and *Factories*: And by making *such other Provision* [particularly, the erecting *Protestant Schools*, and distributing Numbers of *Religious Books*;] as might be judged necessary for the
Propagation

Propagation of THE GOSPEL in those Foreign Parts of the World.

HERE then, THE present SOCIETY began : *This* is it's *Rise* ; *These* the Persons *originally* concerned in it.—And as the Members, forming *This Incorporate Body*, at first, were Men of Dignity and Worth, both in *Religious* and *Civil Life* ; so it continues to this Day [agreeable to it's *Institution*] to be made up of THE BISHOPS and the most Eminent of *The Clergy*, together with several TEMPORAL LORDS and Others, Persons of Weight and Character among *The Laity* : None of Whom receive the Advantage of *a Penny* from it Themselves, but, on the contrary, contribute annually towards it's Support.

ADD to what has been here suggested, as an *Appendage* proper to this Head : That *the Rules* by which THE SOCIETY transacts all Business are *legally approved of*, and *punctually observ'd*. That They give yearly *a printed Account* to The Public of all their Proceedings, exhibiting also an *Abstract* of their *Receipts* and *Disbursements*. And, over and above this, They deliver the Particulars, every Year to The Lord High Chancellor ; and to The Lords, Chief Justices, of *the King's Bench* and *Common Pleas* ¹. So that it is impossible, there should be *any Fraud* in the Ad-

¹ See the *Abstract* of THE SOCIETY's Proceedings for 1752.

ministration of the Monies intrusted with THE SOCIETY. The Whole Kingdom is a Judge of all Their Transactions. And therefore we have the highest Reason to believe, they are all managed with *the utmost Judgment and Probity*. This then is *the first Observable* in Their Favour. Once more,

II. THE NATURE of THIS SOCIETY, and *Their Design* of Incorporation, are Matters highly deserving our Attention. For we cannot but know from Hints already given on the Subject, that *the Basis* on which the present Institution rises, is no other, than what *true Piety* and *sound Virtue* had previously laid for it. This therefore is *no ordinary Incorporation*; but a Body of Men, agreeing to charge Themselves with Matters of *Spiritual Moment*. A Community *zealous for the Honour of God*; the *Advancement of pure Religion*, and *the present and eternal Happiness* of Their Fellow-Creatures. These then are Considerations, which cannot but throw *a Lustre* upon Them, and make Them *venerable* in the Eyes of all those, who have the Interest of *The New Testament System*, as it includes the *distinguishing Principles* of Christianity, and the Propagation of *Moral Virtue* on That Plan, truly at Heart.

AND so much the more is A SOCIETY of this

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Kind

Kind to be *now* rever'd and encouraged, as this is a Day of *great Declension* and *Impurity*. *Iniquity*, but too generally, *abounds*; and *the Love of Many*, towards sacred Things, evidently *waxes cold*¹. What an Honour then is it to the *British Nation*, in general; What an Ornament to the Church of *England*, in particular; that there are even yet among us Persons, who dare enter the Lists for CHRIST, in the Face of *Infidelity* and *Immorality* at Home, and against the joint Opposition of *Pagan Darknefs* and *Popish Superstition* Abroad.

WE have seen by Accounts under the last Head, with what *Integrity* and *Openness* THE SOCIETY act in regard to *the Monies* annually deposited with Them: Here we shall have an Opportunity of observing, that They manage with *equal Piety* and *Wisdom* in Affairs of *Religious Import*; meaning especially, by that Term, what relates to their *Missionaries*, *Catechists* and *School-masters*.—It is a Circumstance, that must be ever mentioned to their Honour, that They are particularly careful, neither to *admit* at first, nor to *retain* afterwards, *Any* in their Service, but such as apply under *the best Patronage*, and continue to *act in Character*. Those of the *Clergy*, who are sent from hence, as *Ministers*, into our *Colonies*, are such only, as are *personally known* to, and *strongly recommended* by, Gentlemen.

¹ *Matth.* xxiv. 12.

of Eminence in *The Church*, or from among *The Laity*. And *Trial* has been generally, if not always, made of their *Abilities*, for the Discharge of their *sacred Functions*, before Their being admitted to this important Trust.

AND, that They keep a *strict Eye* upon Them, during their Residence Abroad, is evident from hence: That THE SOCIETY “ desire their Friends
“ in *America* to be so just to them, when any
“ Person appears there in the Character of a
“ Clergyman of the Church of *England*, but
“ by his Behaviour disgraces that Character, to
“ examine as far as may be into his Letters of
“ Orders, his true Name and Circumstances;
“ and to inspect the List of the Names of the
“ Missionaries of the Society, publish’d annually
“ with their Proceedings; *being* fully persuaded
“ it will appear, that such unworthy Person is
“ not among them; but if it should so happen,
“ that at any Time such a bad Person’s Name
“ should be found in their List, they *again* in-
“ treat all their Friends, in the sacred Name
“ of Christ, to make it known to them, *pro-*
“ *missing that* they will put away from them
“ that wicked Person’.”

It is then abundantly clear, both from *this* and *the preceeding* Head, that those, who are pleased to interest Themselves in this great Work,

’ See *Abstract*, as above, p. 50, 51.

are Persons of *true Dignity* and *Merit*: That they are zealously engaged in the Cause of *strict Virtue* and *Piety*; and that Nothing can divert Them from the closest Attention to those Measures, which may tend most effectually to *promote* and *establish* that glorious Cause.—Surely then, a *Community* of this Sort deserves *some Notice* at our Hands. But why do I speak with that *seeming Indifference*? I would rather say: There cannot, I should think, be a Person among us, so lost to a Sense of *the best Things*, as not to acknowledge, that They, at once, *command our Esteem* and *challenge our Assistance*. A good Christian, I am sure, will think it a *great Pity*, They should be *deserted*. Nay, it will *sensibly afflict* him to hear, that so *worthy an Institution* should sink, so *laudable a Design* be thrown-up, merely for Want of *the proper Supplies*. But this obliges me

III. IN the next Place, to give You a general View of *Their* present *Circumstances*. The Representation, in itself, is rather of *the melancholly Kind*; but may therefore, perhaps, make the deeper Impression upon you to it's Advantage.—“ Their necessary annual Expence” (as you have heard from HIS MAJESTY'S LETTER) “ has exceeded their certain annual Income, for “ several Years past, by more than the Sum of “ Three

“ Three Thousand Pounds,” in Consequence of which, “ They have incurr’d a very consider-
“ able Debt.” — Are any ungenerous enough to suspect *the Propriety* of this Conduct, and demand by Way of Complaint: Why has *This* been done? or, wherefore has *this extraordinary Expence* been indulg’d? — *The Reason* is plain, and *The Design* pious.—*The Objects*, to whom THE SOCIETY have been desirous of giving Assistance, by Means of our last Colonies, *Nova Scotia* and *Georgia*, have *greatly increas’d* on their Hands. From hence it appears, that *a greater Number* of Missionaries, Catechists and Schoolmasters have been absolutely wanting. This *additional Number* has, of Course, brought on Them an *increasing Expence*. And who will murmur at this? and not, rather, applaud *that pious Zeal*, with which the Members of THE SOCIETY have been prompted to render *the utmost Service* to our holy Religion?

WE then see Them at present, really incumber’d; yet “ the Governors and People in our “ Plantations” pressing for greater Numbers of *Bibles, Common Prayers*, and other *Religious Books*: Our Churches there, yet distress’d for *more Labourers in the Word and Doctrine* ¹; and other *Seminaries of sound Learning and virtuous Education* much wanted. But whence are *the va-*

¹ 1 Tim. v. 17.

rious Supplies to be had? Where are *the Funds* necessary to support this truly Christian Design in all it's Branches? Behold! THE SOCIETY is thrown on the Generosity of *The Public*. Here is an Appeal made to the Body of the Nation; to All, who are *benevolent* and *pious* amongst us. This, my Brethren, is Their present *Resource*. God grant, it may prove effectual! Nor dare I admit the least Doubt of it. For, I persuade myself, there is not a Soul, that loves CHRIST in *Sincerity* and *Truth*, but will gladly distinguish himself on the present Occasion. Let the Question then go round.—“Am I a Christian
“*indeed*, or only *in Name*? Do I attend *the*
“*Service* of the Church from a Principle of
“*true Love* to ALMIGHTY GOD, or only thro'
“*a slavish Fear* of Man; merely to be *fashion-*
“*able*, and *save Appearances*? Do I believe,
“there is any such Thing as *spiritual Food* to
“be met with in the House of GOD? and that,
“there are really Persons in the World, who
“*hunger* and *thirst after Righteousness*'. Do I
“enter into *the Necessity* of THE WORD and
“SACRAMENTS, as Things absolutely wanting
“to make *the laps'd, degenerate* Creature, truly
“comfortable in this Life, and prepare him for
“the happy Enjoyment of another? — Again :
“Do I look upon myself as *a Steward* for

' *Matth. v. 6.*

“CHRIST,

“CHRIST, our Common SAVIOUR?”¹ accountable, at His Bar, for what He has intrusted me with, whether *little or much*? Am I convinc’d, that it is my Duty to *do good unto All*, as it shall have pleas’d God to bless me; *but especially unto Those, who are of the Household of Faith?*² — Why, a thorough Acquaintance with our own Character, as we may easily form it to Ourselves from the Particulars above, will readily determine our Conduct on the present Application. For, if we share *the genuine Spirit* of the Christian, and therefore possess, either a serious Conviction of our Duty towards *the Institutions* of Divine Grace, as Things *necessary* to Salvation; or can truly sympathize with our Brethren *beyond the Seas*, who are now mourning their *Pittance* of these spiritual Provisions: Certain I am, that we cannot but embrace the Opportunity before us, as a Means of testifying *our Zeal* to THE ALMIGHTY; *our Honour* for THE REDEEMER, and *our affectionate Concern* for the present and eternal Welfare of *this Branch* of our Species.

BUT, if we prove so unhappy, as to have *Nothing* of the real Christian obtain in our Minds; if our Reasonings and Resolutions rise from *another Spring*, and, consequently, take a *different Turn*, if we possess an *absolute Indiffe-*

¹ Jude, ver. 3.

² Gal. vi. 10.

rence towards Persons and Things *truly Religious* ; in a Word, if the Love of *the World*, and not the Love of God, have gain'd the Ascendant in our Hearts ; the Conclusion is instantly made : — It will be a Matter of no Consequence with us, whether the Light of the Gospel be diffus'd, or not ; whether the Kingdom of CHRIST rise, or fall ; and therefore, of Course, whether the poor *Indians*, and others settled in *our Colonies*, have *the Means of Grace* preserv'd to them ; or whether they become a fatal Prey to their *common Enemies* ; the Advocates for *Paganism*, and the Emissaries of *Rome*. — But I hope *better Things of you*, my Brethren, *and Things, that accompany Salvation, though I thus speak*¹. And therefore cannot but presume that, when you take into due Consideration *the Laudableness* of the Work, in which THE SOCIETY is engaged, on the one Part ; and *the Difficulties*, under which They now labour for the Support of it, on the other ; but that every Thing, *truly great and Christian*, within you, will immediately rise, and effectually excite you to give Them *the utmost Assistance* within the Compass of your Fortunes. Especially will you be invigorated to this Conduct, when I observe

IV. THAT THE KING Himself has not been wanting in setting us *a noble Example* on this

¹ *Heb. vi. 9.*

Occasion. THE SOCIETY have to boast *a Gift* from HIS present MAJESTY of Five Hundred Pounds. A shining Mark, as well of His zealous Attachment to *Religion* in general, as of His special Affection to *This Institution* in particular.—Is not therefore, *this gracious Benefaction* from the Throne, a loud Call upon *the Subject* to a Correspondent Liberality in their different Stations? Shall we not *severally* be ambitious of seconding *this Royal Pattern*? Giving Proof to the whole World that, in GREAT BRITAIN, *Prince and People* are animated by the same, common, Divine Principle; a Spirit of *true Christian Benevolence*. And This in no meaner Cause, than what promises *the highest Honour* to CHRIST, *the greatest Prosperity* to this Protestant Nation, and *the most extensive Happiness* to a considerable Part of our own Nature. Because, where we are Instrumental in securing to Them the Administration of THE WORD and SACRAMENTS in their primitive Purity, we may there justly expect *the desired Blessing*: I mean, *their true Conversion* here, and *their eternal Felicity* hereafter.—But this naturally leads,

V. To another Observable, which, if it give THE SOCIETY Itself *a very sensible Pleasure*; cannot, I am confident, fail of doing Them *equal Honour* with THE PUBLIC: Namely, *That*

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remarkable

remarkable Success, with which it has pleased ALMIGHTY GOD to attend their pious Endeavours in propagating the Doctrines of Christianity for more than *Fifty Years* past.—You have heard from HIS MAJESTY'S *Letter*, “ That
 “ They have distributed more than an Hundred
 “ and Thirty Thousand Copies of the Bible, Com-
 “ mon Prayer, and other Religious Books. That
 “ not only some Thousands of *Indians* and *Ne-*
 “ *groes* have been instructed and baptized by
 “ their Missionaries; but likewise, that by their
 “ Means and Procurement, many Churches have
 “ been built in several Parts of HIS MAJESTY'S
 “ Dominions in *America*; where at present in
 “ populous Congregations the Word of God is
 “ taught, and the Sacraments are administred
 “ according to the Liturgy of the Church of
 “ *England*.”

THIS then loudly bespeaks it to have been the Work of *Providence*. For, as *the Abstract* judiciously Remarks, “ had this Council been
 “ of Men, before this Time it had been brought
 “ to nought; its Beginnings were but small,
 “ yet hath it far increased.”¹ And as, from *the Success* with which THE SOCIETY has been bless'd for the above Number of Years, “ there
 “ is just Reason to conclude, that *the Design* is
 “ from above, and cometh down from Him,

¹ See Page 49.

“ from

“from whom every good and perfect Thing
“proceedeth”¹: So, is there equal Ground to
conclude, that THE DIVINE BEING will conti-
nue to watch over it for good, and to water it
continually with the Dew of His Blessing. Be-
cause He has promised not to desert His own
Work²; but *to bless the Provision of Sion, and
satisfy her Poor with Bread*³.

HE works, however, by *Means*. We then
are *His Stewards*, distinguish’d by a Variety of
Spiritual, as well as *Natural Privileges*: And
therefore at our Hands is He now seeking, in the
Course of His Providence, *that Supply*, which
is necessary to make our *Neighbours and Coun-
trymen*, as happy as Ourselves. Let it not then
be *our Condemnation* another Day, that *a Price*
[an Opportunity of *doing Good*] is put into our
Hands; but that, being curs’d with *the Fool’s
Heart*⁴, we wanted the Judgment to improve it
aright. ALMIGHTY GOD, by the present Ap-
peal, is trying *our Obedience* to Himself, as well
as *our Love* to our Fellow-Creatures; tho’ I
might say Fellow-Christians.

It appears then, Whether we consider *the
Character* of the Persons, forming THIS SO-
CIETY; *the Nature* of the Work, in which
They are engag’d; *the Difficulty* and *Embaras-
ment* of their present Circumstances; *the Noble*

¹ See *Abstract*, Ibid. ² *Matth.* xxviii. 20. ³ *Psf.* cxxxii. 15.
⁴ *Prov.* xvii. 16.

Example set Us by OUR GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN; or, lastly, *the glorious Success*, that has hitherto attended this truly Christian Charity; that we have *Motives* in Abundance, to excite us to *Liberality* and even warrant a *Profusion* in the Service before us.—And yet, still to bring the Argument *nearer ourselves* [for we are then always most sensibly affected, when we find *our own particular Interest* at Stake; still, I say, to bring Matters *nearer ourselves*] I have yet to subjoin to the above Incentives,

VI. IN the last Place, That, when we shall have been *most extensively* generous on the present Occasion, it is not, that we shall have been serving *Others only* by our Charity; or, that *Others only* are reaping *the Benefit* of our Christian Munificence: Far from it: We are, in short, all the while *serving ourselves*; nay, and let me add, *serving ourselves chiefly* or *principally*. The Reason is: Because we shall find the Whole of it, at last, *return to*, and *terminate in*, the Christian Benefactor Himself.

THIS will by no Means seem strange, when we recollect, that it is the express Doctrine of our Text; which (if the Repetition may be excus'd) at the same Time, that it lays us under the strictest Injunction, bidding us *Cast our Bread upon the Waters*; condescends, in the next Words,
to

to endear the Performance by that Consideration, which is of all others, the most prevalent with Human Nature : Namely, *our own personal Advantage* : Adding this encouraging Promise : *For thou shalt find it after many Days.*

WHERE then, is *the Covetous, Mercenary Wretch* ? He, that is not for holding out a Finger, scarcely, unless *the Reward be in View* ? He, that must be *paid* for all his Services, even those done his Maker, as well as his Fellow-Creatures ? Where is *This Earth-worm* ? Come, Let him here stand forth.—Say then, Art thou not willing *to serve* GOD, provided thou can'st, at the same Time, *better thyself* ? Well, here is an Opportunity for it : *Cast thy Bread upon THE WATERS.* “That,” thou wilt, probably, say, “is a *very uncertain Element*, indeed. *Where* “may not, what *I cast upon it*, be carried to ? “And *whither* am I to go in quest of it ? or “*when* to expect *the bare Return* of what I “give out *in this Way* ?” Dismiss thy Fears. Here is A PROMISE for thee : A PROMISE from the Mouth of GOD, even That GOD, *who cannot lie* ¹. Be obedient then, and wait the Issue. For He, who is THE GOD of Truth ² has positively said : *It shall turn to thee again.*

¹ Tit. i. 2.² Ps. xxxi. 5.

AND shall the Bread, thou castest upon the Waters, that is, the bare Principal bestowed by thee in a Way of Charity ; shall that precise Portion of thy Bounty be the Whole Return, He will make thee ? No. It shall come to thee with Increase. He that hath Pity upon the Poor, especially the poor Christian, and relieves his Necessities, lendeth unto THE LORD ; and that, which he hath given, will he pay him again¹. And, let me tell thee, with ample Interest. For, as we find it express'd in another Part of Holy Writ : *The Liberal Soul shall be made fat : And he, that watereth, shall be watered also himself*². Witness again, that Testimony by Moses. THE LORD for this Thing shall bless thee in all thy Works, and in all, that thou putest thine Hand unto³. For the farther Account is : That the Liberal Man deviseth liberal Things, and by liberal Things shall he stand⁴.—Who then are the Persons, that suffer in this Case ? Not the generous, but the niggardly Dispenser. For, as the Text says : *There is, that scattereth, and yet increaseth ; and there is, that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to Poverty*⁵.

BUT, it may be, thou art not only covetous of Substance ; but hast also a Taste for Honour : Thou choolest to be seen with the Great and

¹ Prov. xix. 17.² Ibid. ch. xi. 25.³ Deut. xv. 10.⁴ Isa. xxxii. 8.⁵ Prov. xi. 24.

Illustrious of the Earth. Assure thyself then, that here, there are *Honours* for thee too.—From the Institution of THIS SOCIETY in the Year 1701, KINGS have been *it's Nursing-Fathers*, and ONE QUEEN, at least, *it's Nursing-Mother*¹. What therefore mayest thou not promise thyself in *such Company*? Concur with Them in the same glorious Design; then shalt thou stand on *the same List*, and thy Name, inroll'd with Theirs, be transmited to *latest Posterity*.—Nor so only, but FAME Herself, shall resound thy Praise from *the British Isles*, over the wide-extended Plains of *America*.

HEAR then, in what Accents the *Indian* and the *European* Christian shall celebrate thy Name.—“O!” says the One, “it is to thy Bounty, “under a divine Blessing, that *the glad Tidings* “of A SAVIOUR have reach'd my Ears². It is “by thy Means, under the gracious Influence “of Heaven, that *the Prison Doors* have been “set open to me; that I have broke asunder “*the Chains of Sin*, escaped *the Vassalage* of Sa- “*tan*³, and am brought into *the glorious Li-* “*berty of the Children of God*⁴. Thou art the “Person, under THE ALMIGHTY, to whose “pious-Compassion I stand indebted, for *what-* “*ever I am*, at present, and for *all*, that I

¹ Isa. xlix. 23.² Rom. x. 15.³ Isa. lxi. 1. ² Tim.

ii. 26.

⁴ Rom. viii. 21.

“ have

“ have to expect hereafter, as a real Convert.
 “ Thou art the favourite Instrument, in the
 “ Hands of God, by whom I have been re-
 “ cover'd from *the Idolatry* of my Native Coun-
 “ try, and have been made acquainted with
 “ THE ONE, Only True GOD, and JESUS
 “ CHRIST, *whom He has sent* ¹ to be THE SA-
 “ VIOUR of Sinners ². Once I was so stupidly
 “ zealous, as to be bowing down to *the gross,*
 “ *material Sun* ; but now, thro' thy Interpo-
 “ sition, *The Sun of Righteousness* is risen upon
 “ me *with Healing in His Wings* ³. Once was
 “ I so impiously devout, as to be paying the
 “ Homage of *Devils* ⁴, by the Oblation of *Hu-*
 “ *man Sacrifices* ; but now, happy Alternative !
 “ are my Hands lift-up in Adoration of *the*
 “ *Blood* of JESUS, The True Sacrifice of *Atone-*
 “ *ment* ⁵.——O ! go on, Thou Blessed of THE
 “ LORD, in this great and good Work. Per-
 “ severe in *thy Zeal* for God, and *thy Compassion*
 “ for poor, perishing Creatures. Open thy
 “ Hands *still wider*, that *the blessed Seed* of the
 “ Word may be spread yet farther on *the Con-*
 “ *tinent* ; till under the Dews from the Ever-
 “ lasting Hills, *a plentiful Harvest* spring-up
 “ over all the *American World*.” ⁶—Hearest

¹ John xvii. 3.² 1 Tim. i. 15.³ Mal. iv. 2.⁴ 1 Cor. x. 20.⁵ Heb. ix. 26.

Rom. v. 11.

⁶ See*Abstract*, as above, p. 50.

Thou,

Thou, then, what the once *Savage Indian*; what the once *untutor'd Negroe*, utters in thy Praise?

NOR shall *thy own Country* be less attentive to to thy Merit, or less forward to proclaim it aloud. "THIS, says the *British Christian*, the *Reform'd Protestant* in our *Western Settlements* (joining their Acclamations with Those at *Home*, "THIS) is the Man, whom GOD has "rais'd up to do Honour to the Cause of His "Master in the most remote Quarters of the "Earth. THIS is the Man, through whose "Munificence, *an effectual Stand* has been made "against the Enormities of *Paganism* on the "one Hand, and the gross Superstitions of "Popery on the other. Under his Influence, "seconded by Heaven, we see *spiritual Know-* "ledge making it's Progress thro' an immense "Tract of Land. We see *Temples* rising to the "True GOD. *Virtue* placed on it's genuine "Basis. *Kingdoms* wrested from the Hands of "Satan, and their Subjects become *the willing* "Servants of CHRIST JESUS¹."

THUS far, it will be observ'd, that *the present Address* will suit even Those, who have Nothing to inspire them to Acts of Munificence, but Principles merely *natural*; Views wholly *temporal* and *sinister*.—But then, as there is *another Class* of Men, who (be *natural Constitution* what

¹ Ps. cx. 3.

it will) apparently breathe a nobler Spirit, I mean *the warmest Love* to THE ALMIGHTY; and have a more exalted Issue at Heart, namely, *The Advancement* of true Piety and every good Work: So, we have to remark that (besides what Interest they have in *the several Articles* above, in common with *the Worldling*;) they have likewise a Claim to Returns of *a very different Kind*, meaning Those, which are *spiritual* and *heavenly*.—Not but we might observe, even with respect to those Returns, which are of *the present Life* only, that they are derived to The Just under *very different Qualifications* from those, which attend *the common Dispensations* of Providence. Be they, however *temporal* or *spiritual*, for *this World* or *the next*; they are All *such*, as the real Christian is warranted by Heaven to have *Respect*, to in the Course of his Obedience [in *a lower* and *subordinate Way*;) after the Example of the *Jewish Lawgiver*¹, and the Blessed JESUS Himself². Supposing then the Persons we are now speaking of, *by Nature*, of the same *Mercenary Cast* with *the rest*; yet this Temper having been *corrected* by Divine Grace, and brought under *that Direction*, which is *truly worthy* in itself, and always *inseparable* from the real Christian: What follows? Undoubtedly,

¹ Heb. xi. 26.² Ibid. Ch. xii. 6.

That

That they may indulge *the most extensive Views* on this Subject, and promise themselves *the noblest Rewards*, for Time and Eternity, in this Service. *These* [true Christians] have a proper, indisputable Title to *the Recompence of Reward* both here and hereafter: Founded, not in *the Work done* [which we should be careful to observe, least we entangle ourselves again with *the corrupt Doctrines* of the *Romish Church* ;] not in *the Merit* of *their own Actions*, but in *their Relation* to CHRIST; their acting in *His Spirit*, and propagating His Cause from *the Obedience of Faith*. Because, by this Means, approving Themselves *the Members and Servants* of CHRIST, they also assert their Right to a Share in HIS GLORY, and an Interest in All, that *He has promis'd*.

AND how say *the Promises* in this Matter? Take One, that is *general*. GOD is not *unrighteous*, that He should *forget thy Work and Labour of Love*¹; including, among *other Senses*, that the Words may be thought capable of; this *Charitable Act* of thine in ministring to the *Necessities* of thy poor, distress'd Brother. Nay verily, so far is THE ALMIGHTY from being *unrighteous* in this Affair, that, as we are sure, there is A GOD, *that judgeth now in the Earth*; so, we know likewise, that there is *a certain*,

¹ *Hab. vi. 10.*

present *Reward for the Righteous*¹. Art thou inquiring after Particulars? Let an holy Composure and Firmness of Mind, the Peace and Pleasure of thy own Breast, be *One Instance* to thee among others. For THE LORD has said, supposing Thee *the upright, generous Christian: Thou shalt not be afraid of evil Tidings: Thy Heart shall be established: Both as thou trustest in THE LORD*², and bearest about with thee *the Answer of a good Conscience*³.—What saist thou to Health of Body; Support under Illness and a Recovery from it, while thy Presence is necessary below? Yet *the Promise* here is: THE LORD *will strengthen thee upon thy Bed of Languishing; He will preserve and keep thee alive*⁴.—Once more: Knowest thou not, that thou art expos'd to Afflictions and surrounded with Enemies? No Matter. THE LORD *will deliver thee in Time of Trouble: And thou shalt either be saved from the Hand of thy Enemies*⁵, or shalt *see thy Desire upon them*⁶.—Nay, this Reward shall descend to thy Relations and Posterity: *Thy Seed shall be mighty upon Earth: The Generation of the Upright shall be blessed*⁷. With several other Promises of a like Nature, which might be adduced.

¹ *Psf.* lviii. 11.² *Ib.* cxii. 7, 8.³ *Prov.* xxviii. 1.⁴ *Psf.* xli. 2, 3.⁵ *Ib.* ver. 1, 2.⁶ *Ib.* cxii. 8.⁷ *Ib.* ver. 2.

BUT

BUT what puts an Accent upon the Whole, is : That, when GOD shall have *preserv'd* and *enrich'd* thee here ; or, which is *an equal Blessing* to a real Christian, shall have *sanctified a lower and more straighten'd Condition* of Life to thee ; He shall, at last, cover all thy Failings, wipe all Tears from thy Eyes, give His Angels charge of thy disincumber'd Spirit, and take thee to His own Embraces in an upper and better World.

THEN, in *the Resurrection-State*, when thou standest in *thy whole Person*, before the Judgment-Seat of CHRIST¹, equally blessed will be *thy Lot*. For there shalt thou find that, as thou hadst been *Merciful* to His poor Servants in this Life, He also will be *Merciful* to thee. There *Mercy shall rejoice against Judgment* to thy eternal Consolation². Then will thy Judge not only *acquit* thee, but give thee *an honourable Welcome*³. Then will He *recognize* all thy Acts of Liberty in the Face of Men and Angels ; and even acknowledge Himself *thy Debtor* for the good Offices, thou hast done His distress'd Followers, while traversing *this Wilderneck*⁴. In a Word, *Thy Name* shall be had *in everlasting Remembrance*⁵ ; if not with Men, yet, certainly, with GOD Himself. And *in Proportion* to thy pious

¹ 2 Cor. v. 10.² Jam. ii. 13.³ Matth. xxv. 21.⁴ Ibid. ver. 42—45.⁵ Ps. cxii. 6.

Services *here*, shalt thou receive at the Hands of THE ALMIGHTY *hereafter*. — For, I think, I may venture to affirm, that *the good Works* perform'd by us in the present Life, will be *the Standard* of our respective Honours in that which is to come.

WHAT then is the Conclusion of the whole Matter? It lies in a very narrow Compass. — Whether *thou lovest thyself*, or desirest to honour THY Heavenly FATHER: To do good, and to communicate, forget not: For with such Sacrifices GOD is well pleased¹. — Wherefore, supposing thou art Rich: Give liberally, and GOD shall add to thy Abundance. But if thou art Poor: Take only *this short Hint* with thee: That “the Widow’s Mite, like her Cruise of Oil, may “ feed a Prophet and herself too”².

¹ Heb. xiii. 16.

² See the Abstract, p. 50.



THE END.

